

E S T H E R:

3

A N

O R A T O R I O.

A S P E R F O R M E D

At CHURCH-LANGTON in *Leicestershire.*



L E I C E S T E R:

Printed by JOHN GREGORY, MDCCLXI.

Price ONE SHILLING.

The PERSONS represented.

ESTHER.

AHASUERUS.

First *I/raelite*.

HAMAN.

MORDECAI.

Priest of the I/raelites.

HARBONAH.

Persian Officer.

Second *I/raelite.*

I/raelites.

Officers.



Printed by JOHN GREGORY, Montreal.

THE ONE SHILLING.

(3)

E S T H E R :

A N

O R A T O R I O.

P A R T I.

Israelite Woman.

R E C I T A T I V E *Accompany'd.*

B Reathe soft ye gales, ye rills in silence roll,
and heavenly peace reside in *Esther's* soul.

A I R.

Watchful angels let her share
Your indulgent daily care.

R E C I T A T I V E.

O king of kings! celestial lord !
Whose works our admiration raise,
With rapture shall my lips record
Thy Majesty's immortal praise.

Mord.

Mord. With transport, lovely queen, I see
 The wonders God has wrought for thee !
 Thy blooming beauty he bestows,
 To end dejected *Zion's* woes ;
 The lord of *Asia* on his throne
 Now languishes for thee alone ;
 And by thy Empire in his breast,
Judea may again be blest.

A I R.

So much beauty sweetly blooming,
 Shall thy consort's soul enslave ;
 In thy lovely pow'r presuming,
 Ask him all thy heart can crave.

R E C I T A T I V E.

Again shall *Salem* to the skies,
 From all her woes triumphant rise,
 And our avenging God with speed,
 Captivity shall Captive lead.

A N T H E M.

My heart is inditing of a good matter ; I speak
 of the things which I have made unto the King.
 Kings daughters are among thy honourable
 Women ;

women ; upon thy right hand did stand the queen
in vesture of gold ; and the King shall have pleasure
in thy beauty.

Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens
thy nursing mothers.

Assuerus. Let me with freedom thy petition know,
Thy virtues merit all I can bestow,

Haman. O king, for ever live ! thy slave's request
Flows from the duty of a loyal breast.

The vassal *Jews* thro' all thy realms, disdain
A due subjection to thy gracious reign ;
They boast their God will plead their cause,
Restore their temple and their laws.
Ah ! wou'd my sovereign in his slave confide,
I soon wou'd humble their pernicious pride,
Whose impious ardour to rebel,
Captivity's too mild to quell.

Assuerus. Go settle then my soul's repose,
Avenge thy monarch on his foes ;
Pursue their pride with a relentless hand,
And purge rebellion from the tainted land.

A I R.

A I R.

Endless fame thy days adorning,
 Glory brighter than the morning
 Shall reward thy faithful care.
 Titles all their lustre lending,
 To thy latest race descending
 Shall thy Prince's love declare.

Haman, Harbonah, and Officers.

Har. 'Tis greater far to spare than to destroy.

Ham. I'll hear no more, it is decreed,
 All the *Jewish* race shall bleed.

Hear and obey what *Haman's* voice commands :
 Hath not the lord of all the east

Giv'n all his pow'r into my hands ?
 Hear, all ye nations far and wide,
 Which own our monarch's sway,
 Hear, and obey.

A I R.

Pluck root and branch out of the land ;

Shall I the God of *Israel* fear ?
 Let *Jewish* blood die every hand ;
 Nor age, nor sex i'll spare :

Raze,

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Raze, raze their temples to the ground,
And let their place no more be found.

Officer. Our souls with ardour glow,
To execute the blow.

C H O R U S.

Shall we the God of *Israel* fear ?

Nor age, nor Sex we'll spare.

Pluck root and branch out of the land.

[*Ex.*

R E C I T. First *Israelite.*

Jerusalem no more shall mourn
In sad Captivity forlorn :

The righteous God in whom we trust,

Will be propitious to the just ;

To rapture then your voices raise,

And change your sighs to songs of praise.

A I R.

Tune your harps to chearful strains,

Moulder idols in the dust ;

Great *Jehovah* lives and reigns,

We in great *Jehovah* trust.

C H O-

C H O R U S.

Shall we of servitude complain,
The heavy yoke, and galling chain ?

A I R. *Israelite.*

Praise the lord with chearful noise ;
Wake my glory, wake my lyre ;
Praise the lord, each mortal voice ;
Praise the lord, ye heav'nly choir :
Zion now her head shall raise ;
Tune your harps to songs of praise.

R E C I T A T I V E.

O God, who from the suckling's mouth
Ordainest early praise,
Of such as worship thee in truth,
Accept the humble lays.

A I R. *Second Israelite.*

Sing songs of praise, bow down the knee,
Our chains we flight,
Our yoke is light,
The worship of our God is free.

Zion

Zion again her head shall raise ;
 'Tune all your harps to songs of praise.

Chorus again, Shall we of, &c.

Enter the Priest, of the Israelites.

How have our sins provoked the lord !
 Wild persecution hath unsheath'd the sword.
Haman hath sent forth his decree.

The sons of *Israel* all
 Shall in one ruin fall.

Methinks I hear the mothers groans,
 Whilst babes are dash'd against the stones ;
 I hear the infant's shriller screams,
 Stabb'd at the mother's breast ?

Blood stains the murderer's vest,
 And thro' the city flows in streams.

C H O R U S.

Ye sons of *Israel* mourn.

Ye never to your country shall return.

A I R.

O *Jordan, Jordan*, sacred tide !
 Shall we no more behold thee glide
 'The fertile vales along,

As

As in our great forefather's days ?
 Shall not thy hills resound with praise,
 And learn our holy songs ?

Chorus again, Ye sons, &c.

P A R T II.

Esther, Mordecai, and Israelites,

C H O R U S.

TYrants may a-while presume
 They never shall receive their doom ;
 But they soon shall trembling know.
 Stern justice strikes the surest blow.

Esther. Why sits that sorrow on thy brow ?

Why is thy reverend head

With mournful ashes spread ?

Why is the humble sackcloth worn ?

Speak, *Mordecai*, my kinsman, friend,

Speak, and let *Esther* know,

Why all this solemn woe ?

Mordecai. One fate involves us all,

Ha

Haman's decree,
 To strike at me,
 Hath said, that every *Jew* shall fall.
 Go stand before the king with weeping eye.
Esther. Who goes unsummon'd, by the law shall
 die.

A I R.

Mord. Dread not, righteous queen, the danger,
 Love will pacify his anger ;
 Fear is due to God alone :
 Follow great *Jehovah's* calling ;
 For thy kindred's safety falling,
 Death is better than a throne.

R E C I T A T I V E.

O heav'n protect her with thy tender care,
 And make the King propitious to her pray'r.

D U E T T.

Blessings descend on downy wings,
 Angels conduct her on her way ;
 New life our royal *Esther* brings,
 Since our cause she pleads to-day.
Esther. I go before the king to stand :
 Stretch forth, O king thy scepter'd hand.

A I R.

A I R.

Tears assist me, pity moving,
 Justice cruel fraud reproving,
 Hear, O God, thy servant's pray'r .
 Is it blood that must atone ?
 Take, O take my life alone,
 And thy chosen people spare.

C H O R U S.

Save us, O lord !
 And blunt the wrathful sword.

[*Ex.*

Assuerus, Esther, and Israelites.

Assuer. Who dares intrude into our presence
 without our leave ?

It is decreed,
 He dies for this audacious deed.
 Hah ! *Esther* there !

The law condemns, but love will spare.

Esther. My spirits sink, alas ! I faint.

Assuerus. Ye powers, what paleness spreads her
 beauteous face !

Esther awake, thou fairest of thy race,
 Awake and live, 'tis my command ;
 Behold the golden sceptre in my hand,

Sure

Sure sign of grace ;
 The bloody, stern decree,
 Was never meant, my queen, to strike at thee.

A I R, *Duett.*

Esther. Who calls my parting soul from death ?

Assuer. Awake my soul, my life, my breath.

Esther. Hear my suit or else I die.

Assuer. Ask, my queen ; can I deny ?

A I R.

O beauteous queen, uncloſe thoſe eyes,

My faireſt ſhall not bleed ;

Hear love's ſoft voice, that bids thee riſe,

And bids thy ſuit ſucceed.

Ask, and 'tis granted from this hour ;

Who ſhares our heart ſhall ſhare our pow'r.

Esther. If I find favour in thy ſight,

May the great monarch of the eaſt

Honour my feaſt,

And deign to be his ſervant's gueſt ;

'The *King* and *Haman* I invite.

Assuer. How can I ſtay when love invites ?

I come, my queen to chaſte delights.

With

With joy, with pleasure I obey
To thee I give the day.

First Israelite.

With inward joy his visage glows,
He to the queen's apartment goes:
Beauty has his fury charm'd,
And all his wrath disarm'd.
Beauty will her power maintain ;
What can beauty crave in vain.

A I R.

Heav'n has lent her ev'ry charm
Rising fury to disarm ;
And the monarch's breast will prove
That each passion yields to love.

C H O R U S.

Virtue, truth, and innocence
Shall ever be her sure defence :
She is heaven's peculiar care,
Propitious heav'n will hear our pray'r,

R E C I T A T I V E.

The King will listen to his royal fair,
And own her lovely prevalence of pray'r.

A N-

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A N T H E M.

God is our hope, and we will cause the King to
shew.

Mercy to *Jacob's* race. God save the King,
Long live the King !
May the King live for ever.
Amen, Allelujah.

P A R T III.

Enter the Priest, of the Israelites.

JEhovah crown'd with glory bright,
Surrounded with eternal light,
Whose ministers are flames of fire,
Arise, and execute thine ire.

C H O R U S.

He comes, he comes, to end our woes,
And pour his vengeance on our foes :
Earth trembles, lofty mountains nod :
Jacob arise to meet thy God.

Ex.

As-

Assuerus, Haman, Esther and Israelites.

Assuer. Now, O my queen, thy suit declare ;
Ask half my Empire, it is thine.

Esther. O gracious king ! my people spare,

For in their lives you strike at mine ;
Reverse the dire decree,
The blow is aim'd at *Mordecai* and me.
And is the fate of *Mordecai* decreed,
Who when the Russian's sword,
Sought to destroy my royal lord,
Brought forth to light the desperate deed ?

Assuer. Yes, yes, I own,
To him alone,
I owe my life and throne :
Say then, my queen, who dares pursue
The life to which reward is due ?

Esther. 'Tis *Haman's* hate
That sign'd his fate.

Assuer. I swear by yon bright orb of light,
That rules the day,
That *Haman's* fight
Shall never more behold the golden ray.

A I R.

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A I R.

Ham. Turn not, O queen, thy face away,
Behold me prostrate on the ground: [Kneels.
O speak ! his growing fury stay,
Let mercy in thy sight be found.

A I R.

Esther. Flatt'ring tongue, no more i'll hear thee,
Vain are all thy cruel wiles ;
Bloody wretch, no more I fear thee,
Vain thy frowns, and vain thy smiles :
Tyrant, when of power possess'd.
Now thou tremblest, when distress'd.

Assuer. Guards, seize the traytor, bear him hence,
Death shall reward the dire offence :
To *Mordecai* be honour paid,
The royal garment bring,
My diadem shall grace his head,
Let him in triumph thro' the streets be led,
Who sav'd the King.

A I R.

Thro' the nation he shall be
Next in dignity to me ;

All

All my people shall revere
 Merit to their prince so dear.
 Daily to his honour'd name,
 Incense shall on altars flame ;
 Whilst applauding crouds around,
 Shall his deathless fame resound.

C H O R U S.

All applauding crouds around,
 Shall his deathless fame resound.

A I R.

Ham. How art thou fallen from the height !
 Tremble, ambition, at the sight :

In power let mercy sway ;
 When adverse fortune be thy lot,
 Lest thou by mercy be forgot,
 And perish in that day.

Esther. I'll proclaim the wond'rous story
 Of the mercies I receive,
 From the day springs dawning glory,
 'Till the fading beam of Eve.

Isr. Wom. All the blessings heav'n is lending
 Will demand our grateful lays,
 To his radiant throne ascending,
 Wafted on the wings of praise.

Both.

Both. In exalted raptures joining,
We'll employ our happy days ;
All our grateful pow'rs combining
To declare his endless praise.

Enter Israelites with Mordecai in triumph.

Grand Chorus.

The lord our enemy has slain,
Ye sons of *Jacob* sing a chearful strain.
Sing songs of praise, bow down the knee,
The worship of our God is free.
The lord our enemy has slain,
Ye sons of *Jacob* sing a chearful strain.
For ever blessed be his holy name,
Let heav'n and earth his praise proclaim ;
Let *Israel* songs of joy repeat ;
Sound all ye tongues, *Jehovah's* praise,
He plucks the mighty from his seat,
And cuts off half his days.
For ever blessed be his holy name,
Let heav'n and earth his praise proclaim.
The lord his people shall restore,
And we in *Salem* shall adore.

For

For ever blessed be his holy name,
Let heav'n and earth his praise proclaim.
Mount *Lebanon* his firs resigns ;
Descend, ye Cedars ; haste ye pines,
To build the temple of the lord,
For God his people hath restor'd :
For ever blessed be his holy name,
Let heaven and earth his praise proclaim.

T H E E N D.



